

TIP SHEET

Using a Semester Planner

A semester plan shows important study related dates during a semester. It allows you to keep track of what assessments are due and what they're worth – at a glance. It helps you manage your time more effectively by showing you the peak study load times. Follow these steps to use your semester planner effectively:

1. START DATES

Write the start date for each week of the semester. Note that there's usually a non-teaching week mid-semester with no 'teaching week number'.

2. ADD YOUR ASSESSMENTS

At the start of each semester you'll be given unit outlines detailing what assessments are required for each unit, when they're due and what they're worth. Put this information into your semester planner as shown in the example below.

3. ADD UP THE MARKS

Make sure each unit adds up to 100%, including exams.

Make a note of whether you must pass the exam to pass the unit. Some units also allocate marks to tutorial attendance – be aware if any of your units do.

4. ADD ASSESSMENT START DATES

Now that you know your busy times you can work out when you'll begin work on a piece of assessment. In the example above, 5 pieces of assessment are due within a 3-week period (10-12) so it would be smart for this student to plan to begin work on some, or all, of them several weeks before they're due. These start dates can be marked on the planner.

5. ALLOCATE PRIORITIES

Knowing how much each piece of assessment is worth will help you decide how much time to spend on it, e.g. it doesn't make sense to allocate 3 weeks to prepare an assignment worth 20% and only 1 week to prepare a major project worth 60%.

6. ADD OTHER KEY DATES

List other important dates and activities on your semester planner, e.g. a wedding, family visit. This helps help you identify if you have assessments due around that time so you can plan to start it earlier.

7. PUT IT ON A WALL

Once you've completed your semester planner put it somewhere where you can see it easily, such as above your study desk. Refer to it frequently so that no piece of assessment 'sneaks up' on you!

E.g.

| | DATE OF EACH SEMESTER WEEK | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|----------------------------|---|---|---|--------------|---------------|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|----|---------------|----|------------|---------------|
| Date | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Week | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | Mid Sem break | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | Study week | EXAMS |
| Unit A | | | | | Ass 10% 25th | | | | | | | Ass 20% 13th | | | | | Exam 70% Pass |
| Unit B | | | | | | Test 20% 31st | | | | | | Test 20% 12th | | Proj 60% 27th | | | N/A |

WANT TO CHAT TO SOMEONE?

For a confidential – and free – chat about your general situation, please contact our Counselling service to make an appointment at any of our campuses.

 counselling@ecu.edu.au  (08) 9370 6706

Alternatively, you can discuss study techniques and tips with a Learning Adviser in our Academic Skills Centre.

 learningadviser@ecu.edu.au

